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XX. Bases in the Pacific

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At his press conference on March 8 the Acting Secretary of State, Mr. Welles, replying to a question of a correspondent concerning reports in congressional circles that informal assurances have been received from some of our Pacific allies concerning permanent rights to bases after the war, stated that that raised a very important general question and he thought the most helpful way he could approach it was along the lines that our whole policy is directed toward assuring ourselves that the security of this country and the security of the people of the United States would be completely safeguarded at the end of this war. Certainly one of the elements in that policy, Mr. Welles said, is the unconditional surrender and the complete disarmament of Japan. Mr. Welles continued that his belief was that emphasis should be placed on the means of international security that can be achieved in the future so that the Pacific will be as safe for all law-abiding nations and peaceful nations that are interested in the Pacific as for the United States. Not that the United States should claim that the Pacific should be a lake under American jurisdiction, but rather, Mr. Welles said, that it should be a peaceful lake equally secure and equally safe for all powers and particularly for all powers interested in the

Pacific. Mr. Welles concluded that naturally the question which the correspondent asked was a question which he thought all the United Nations would wish to discuss—and particularly all the nations which are interested in the Pacific would wish to discuss.